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Message Text

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46
ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01

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INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 NEA-10 DRC-01 EURE-00 /134 W
---------- 026229
O R 041445Z DEC 73
FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4160
INFO USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE
CINCLANT
COMICEDEFOR

UNCLAS REYKJAVIK 1466

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MARR IC NATO
SUBJECT: IDF RETENTION ISSUE: INTERVIEW WITH PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE
MINISTER MAGNUS KJARTANSSON

REF: REYKJAVIK 1465

1. IN ANSWER TO EDITORIAL WHICH APPEARED IN PROGRESSIVE PARTY NEWSPAPER DEC 1 (REFTEL), MAGNUS KJARTANSSON, MINISTER REPRESENTING COMMUNIST-DOMINATED PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE AND PA SPOKESMAN ON DEFENSE MATTERS, GAVE INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN DEC . 4 ISSUE OF PARTY NEWSPAPER THJODVILJINN AS FOLLOWS:

QUOTE: ON THE FIRST OF DECEMBER TIMINN PUBLISHED AN EDITORIAL CALLED DEFENSE AFFAIRS THAT CAUSED GREAT JOY IN MORGUNBLADID THE DAY AFTER. IN THE EDITORIAL IT SAYS AMONG OTHER THINS "AS BEFORE THE PROGRESSIVE PARTY STRESSES THAT THE AIMS OF THE GOVERNMENT PLATFORM BE REACHED BY REVISION OF THE AGREEMENT, I.E., THAT THE AGREEMENT BE NOT TERMINATED ..."

QUOTE: BECAUSE OF THIS EDITORIAL THJODVILJINN CONTACTED MAGNUS
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KJARTANSSON WHO HAS BEEN ASKED TO DEAL WITH DEFENSE AFFAIRS ON

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BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE AND ASKED HIM IF THIS EDITORIAL MEANT A POLICY CHANGE ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT.

QUOTE: MAGNUS KJARTANSSON SAID: "I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THIS EDITORIAL BY TOMAS KARLSSON MEANS. RECENTLY I HAVE BEEN PAYING ATTENTION TO SOME PECULIAR ARTICLES THAT HE HAS PRODUCED IN TIMINN FOR EXAMPLE WHEN HE COMPARED SOME MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE PP WITH WEEDS THAT HAD TO BE TORN UP. IN THIS EDITORIAL HE GOES A STEP FURTHER BY ATTACKING PRIME MINISTER OLAFUR JOHANNESSON AND FOREIGN MINISTER EINAR AGUSTSSON.

QUOTE: THE WHOLE WORLD KNOWS THAT BOTH THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAVE MADE IT CLEAR OVER THE PAST FEW WEEKS THAT IF AGREEMENT WAS NOT REACHED ON THE COMPLETE DEPARTURE OF THE MILITARY BEFORE THE 25TH OF DECEMBER, THE ALTHING WOULD BE ASKED AFTER THE CHRISTMAS VACATION TO GRANT THE GOVERNMENT THE RIGHT TO TERMINATE THE SO-CALLED DEFENSE AGREEMENT WHICH WOULD THEN BECOME INVALID IN 12 MONTHS AND THE MILITARY WOULD HAVE TO BE GONE BEFORE THAT TIME. IT IS ALSO QUITE WELL KNOWN THAT THE REASON FOR THESE STATEMENTS BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAS BEEN THE RELUCTANCE BY THE AMERICAN NEGOTIATORS TO DISCUSS THE REAL ISSUE WHICH IS THE ICELANDIC DEMAND THAT THE MILITARY IS TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY COMPLETELY BEFORE THIS TERM IS OVER. OF COURSE, ALL ICELANDERS WOULD HAVE CHOSEN TO REACH THESE AIMS BY AN AGREEMENT BUT IT IS NOW FURTHER DECLARED THAT NO AGREEMENT WILL BE MADE ON BEHALF OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT. THIS IS WHAT THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAVE BEEN MAKING CLEAR TO THE NATION OVER THE PAST FEW WEEKS.

QUOTE: IT DOES NOT SURPRISE ME IF TOMAS KARLSSON DOES NOT WANT TO TERMINATE THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT UNLESS THE AMERICAN ARMY COMMAND IN THE PENTAGON WOULD AGREE TO IT. HOWEVER, I THINK IT IS STRANGE THAT HE SHOULD HAVE THE COURAGE TO PUBLICIZE HIS PRIVATE OPINIONS IN AN EDITORIAL WHICH MORGUNBLADID CAN INTERPRET AS THE POLICY OF THE PARTY AS WELL AS THE POLICY OF THE MINISTERS WHO TOMAS KARLSSON IS TRYING TO TURN INTO LIARS.

QUOTE: WHILE ICELANDERS STILL BELONG TO NATO THEY WILL HAVE TO FULFILL THEIR OBLIGATIONS. OUR OBLIGATIONS TOWARD NATO ARE UNCLASSIFIED

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LISTED IN THE NATO AGREEMENT AND THERE IS NOT A WORD IN THAT AGREEMENTA ABOUT THE SURVEILLANCE AND WARNING OPERATIONS THAT TOMAS KARLSSON IS TALKING ABOUT. BUT NATO HAS ALSO OBLIGATIONS TOWARD US WHICH IS THAT THERE NEVER BE A FOREIGN ARMY NOR FOREIGN MILITARY BASES STATIONED IN ICELAND DURING TIMES OF PEACE AND DURING TIMES OF WAR IT IS UP TO ICELAND WHAT THE COUNTRY DECIDES TO GRANT TO NATO. THIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE NATO AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REITERATED BY GENERAL MEETINGS OF THE PROGRESSIVE PARTY

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FOR YEARS. THE INTERPRETATION BY TOMAS KARLSSON IS IN DIRECT CONFLICT WITH THESE VIEWS.

QUOTE: THEN TOMAS KARLSSON DISCUSSES THOSE ARTICLES OF THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT THAT WILL REMAIN IN FORCE EVEN IF THE AGREEMENT IS TERMINATED. ACCORDING TO HIM WE HAVE TO LOOK AFTER EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATIONS THAT WILL REMAIN WHEN THE MILITARY LEAVES AND KEEP IT READY WHENEVER NATO AND THE GOVERNMENT THINK IT NECESSARY TO USE IT.

QUOTE: THIS INTERPRETATION IS ALSO AN EXAMPLE OF COMPLETE IGNORANCE. WHEN THE MILITARY CAME IN 1951 WITHOUT THE APPROVAL OF THE NATION AND THE SO-CALLED DEFENSE AGREEMENT WAS MADE, IT WAS SOLEMNLY PROMISED BY THE GOVERNMENT THAT THE MILITARY WOULD SOON LEAVE AGAIN. HOWEVER, IT WAS SUPPOSED THAT THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT WOULD REMAIN VALID EVEN IF THE ARMY LEFT AND IN THAT CASE ICELAND WAS TO LOOK AFTER EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATIONS. THIS HAS NEVER COME TO A TEST BECAUSE THE MILITARY HAS BEEN HERE FOR ALMOST 25 YEARS DESPITE ALL THE PROMISES. IF THE AGREEMENT IS TERMINATED, ON THE OTHER HAND, THESE ARTICLES AS ALL OTHERS WILL DISAPPEAR: AND NONE OF THEM WILL STAY IN FORCE. I THINK THAT EVEN THE AMERICAN NEGOTIATORS HAVE NEVER THOUGHT OF BRINGING UP NONSENSE OF THE KIND THAT THESE STATEMENTS BY TOMAS KARLSSON ARE BUT PERHAPS THEY WILL NOW LEARN FROM HIM.

QUOTE: DO YOU THINK THAT THE EDITORIAL BY TOMAS KARLSSON ONLY RFLECTS HIS PERSONAL OPINIONS? REPLY: I DON'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF WORKING METHODS TOMAS USES WHEN HE PRETENDS TO BE FORMING A POLICY IN DIFFICULT MATTERS. HOWEVER, I WANT TO REPEAT WHAT I HAVE SAID MANY TIMES BEFORE: THE ARTICLE IN THE GOVERNMENT PLATFORM ABOUT THE DEPARTURE OF THE ARMY IS A PROMISE THAT ALL THE GOVERNMENT PARTIES AGREED TO. IT WAS ALSO PROMISED THAT ALL THE GOVERNMENT PARTIES WOULD MAKE EQUAL EFFORTS TO SEE TO IT THAT
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THE AGREEMENT WAS CARRIED OUT. I AM CONVINCED THAT ALL MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT PARTIES IN THE ALTHING THINK IT A MATTER OF THEIR HONOR TO KEEP THIS PROMISE. TOMAS KARLSSON IS FORTUNATELY A RESERVE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT. BUT IN CASE THAT SOME MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT ON THE GOVERNMENT TEAM WOULD FAIL TO VOTE FOR THIS HE IS TERMINATING THE COOPERATION OF THESE GOVERNMENT PARTIES. END QUOTE.

2. COMMENTS FOLLOW SEPTEL.
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Disposition Event:
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